Concurrent Session D Monday 12 September 2016 2:25pm – 3:15pm



Session 7 Post Occupancy Evaluations (POEs) for Educational Facilities: A Mobile Application to Collect Standardised Data <u>Dr Lyn Alderman</u>, Professor Jill Franz, Monique Howard, Michael Pratt

Queensland University of Technology, Department of Education, Training and Employment

With over 20 years' experience in higher education and 10 years focused on evaluation and learning analytics, Dr Lyn Alderman has a wealth of understanding in institution-wide evaluation frameworks, evaluation of teaching, learning analytics and performance models, and how to engage in broad and rich stakeholder engagement to inform curriculum decisionmaking. As the sole investigator of an illuminative evaluation into Australian Government policy borrowing and implementation, lead investigator to research Post Occupancy Evaluation (POEs) of education facilities, external evaluator to examine the quality assurance framework of an international university and consultant to reconceptualise the student evaluation framework for a national university, Lyn is judiciously situated to present and disseminate her research and experience in higher education and evaluation. Lyn is the President of the Australasian Evaluation Society (2014 - 2018) and an Editor of the Evaluation Journal of Australasia (2012 - current).

Historically, the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) has outsourced the role of undertaking Post Occupancy Evaluations (POEs) to professionals to provide the Department with data on the functional, technical and environmental performance of high profile Capital Works Delivery programs. These include, most recently, the South East Queensland School s PPP Program, State Schools of Tomorrow Program (SSOT), Building the Education Revolution (BER), and the Year 7 Flying Start Pilot Program (in 2011, 20 schools were chosen to pilot the move of Year 7 to high school). In 2013, a POE Pilot Study was developed and undertaken by DETE staff, with the assistance of an externally sourced architect with a high level of knowledge in the design of DETE facilities, with the aim of developing a Post Occupancy Evaluation Framework for the Department that would provide a consistent data set to inform the future design of DETE facilities. The POEs that have been undertaken to date have provided the Department with data in relation to the following criteria: functional performance; technical and environmental performance; quality; value for money; and, fit-for-purpose. However, each POE commission has collated the data sets utilising different methodologies and by sorting the criteria under a variety of headings. Therefore, whilst the POE's have provided the Department with excellent data, the varying methodologies used have precluded the Department, to date, from being able to accurately compare data across programs over time. One of the key objectives for DETE is to develop a Post Occupancy Evaluation Framework, with the requisite tools and templates, in conjunction with QUT, which will enable the Department to collect data in a consistent manner thus enabling data comparisons across programs over time.

The Department's aim is to deliver high quality, fit for purpose and future focused educational facilities. Further, recent research has shown that there is a link between quality learning environments and improved educational outcomes (Institute of Social Research, 2013). Therefore, another key objective for DETE is for the Post Occupancy Evaluation Framework to provide the Department with data that will inform both the Capital Works Planning Process and the Department's Design Standards for DETE Facilities suite of documentation which sets the framework

for a consistent approach to the delivery and refurbishment of innovative and cost effective educational facilities in Queensland. Research and pilot studies undertaken by DETE suggest that the incorporation of findings from POE's as a key input into the Design Standards Review Framework process, and any subsequent amendments to the Capital Works Planning process and the suite of Design Standards, will improve the quality of the learning environments, increase the sustainability and reduce the long-term maintenance costs of infrastructure delivered across the Capital Works Delivery programs. Moreover, the proposed POE process will also complement benchmarking studies on Capital Works programs.

Therefore, this seed project addressed the initial concern of how to professionalise the collection of data from POEs to inform design standards for educational facilities. The Post Occupancy Evaluation Tool mobile application developed by this seed project is unique, builds on previous work found within the literature and addresses a real issue that DETE face in being able to compare and contrast across building types, building methods and approaches to procurement.

This presentation offers participants the chance to look at the rhetoric (an ad hoc approach to POEs) and the new reality (a technolocial solution to collect standardised POE data). The researchers will present the methodology that informed the development of a mobile application, outlines the partnership between university and industry, how a literature review, environmental scan, stakeholder engagement and testing by 25 students led to the launch of version of of the Post Occupancy Evaluation Tool mobile app.